

SCAAC Meeting Minutes

(School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council)

May 27, 1998
State Board Room

SCAAC Agenda

#	Agenda Items	Presenters
1.	Meeting Minutes	Anne Keene
2.	Taped Interviews from Western Kentucky University	Roger Pankratz
3.	NTAPAA Phone Conference May 26, 1998	Jonathan Dings
4.	House Bill 53	Anne Keene
5.	Dr. James Catterall's Conference Call	Dr. James Catterall
6.	Council Issues	Anne Keene
7.	Issue of Score Points	Jonathan Dings
8.	National Norm Referenced Test (NRT)	Scott Trimble
9.	Longitudinal Models	Scott Trimble
10.	Test Design/Scheduling of Test Administration	Scott Trimble
Adjournment		

Copies of audiotapes of the meeting are available upon request.

Chairperson Anne Keene called the meeting to order.

The roll was called and there was a quorum present.

Members Present:

Kay Freeland
Suzanne Guyer
Anne Keene
Benny Lile

Gary Mielcarek
Roger Pankratz
Bob Sexton
Sharon Solomon

John Stephens
Maynard Thomas
Bob Young

1. Meeting Minutes

Anne Keene

Anne Keene gave an overview of the agenda for the day, including approving minutes for the May 20th meeting; hearing portions of an audio tape submitted by Roger Pankratz of a recent NPR broadcast; reviewing the National Technical Advisory Panel for Assessment and Accountability's advice, and reviewing the working matrix of recommendations for confirmation and revision. The Council agreed to put in a full day and evening to accomplish as much as possible.

Anne Keene shared excerpts of an article in Education Week entitled "Proficient at What?". She expressed her concern that the Council do as much as possible to ensure that the assessment designed be worth teaching toward and produce consistent, reliable information about what students have learned in Kentucky schools.

2. Taped Interview from Western Kentucky University

Roger Pankratz

The Chair recognized Roger Pankratz who introduced a taped interview recently aired on Western Kentucky University's Public Radio station. The Council listened to portions of the tape. The interview included comments from several area educators who responded to questions about the changes proposed in House Bill 53. Those interviewed expressed the following concerns:

1. Time spent on testing
2. Complexity of the KIRIS tests administration
3. A desire for reliable and valid information
4. Student level accountability
5. Opinions on rewards and sanctions
6. The opinion that sanctions and not rewards were the driving force under the old accountability model
7. The cause and effect of KERA/KIRIS demands and pressure on turnover and retirement among teachers and administrators
8. One interviewee stressed his opinion that most educators did not want to go back to the old way-pre-KERA practices-rather, he felt most had a real desire to keep the good parts of KIRIS
9. Use of the 3 million dollars that will be available for school improvement
10. Discussion of changes in the renamed Distinguished Educators program from which assistance will be available on a voluntary basis

11. Comparison of KIRIS tests to the House Bill 53 mandates: Norm Reference Tests (NRT), longitudinal comparisons; technical soundness and validity
12. Several on the panel addressed a desire for a good NRT and some way to compare Kentucky students with other students nationally or internationally-the concept of "world class education"
13. Discussion of the gravity and scope of the development of a new assessment in the time frame given
14. Discussion of the ability to actually produce a new assessment in the time frame given Questions on how different the new assessment and accountability models would be-several opinions were expressed
15. One of the panel members noted that there can be no "perfect" test and test development must be viewed as an ongoing process rather than a one time effort
16. The panel addressed the need to involve all stakeholders in the assessment and accountability development
17. The issue of student motivation-how to involve students more effectively; the problem that Students don't see how the tests affect them, or how the tests are relevant to them
18. The issue of rewards was discussed by the panel-where the money went and how it was spent
19. The issues of tying the test to an exit requirement for graduation or grade-to-grade promotion
20. The idea to give scholarships tied to test scores to students to attend Kentucky colleges and universities

The tape excerpt ended and the Council began its discussions.

3. NTAPAA Phone Conference May 26th

Jonathan Dings

Chairperson Anne Keene introduced the topic of the phone conference on May 26th with the National Technical Advisory Panel (NTAPAA). Jonathan Dings handed out the questions and responses in draft form (Replies document) and noted that these are merely draft documents under review which may or may not accurately reflect all the issues and discussion from the phone conference.

SCAAC Question:

Roger Pankratz asked for clarification of whether or not the Council would have a firm set of recommendations at the end of today's session. He also asked again about Core Content and whether or not the Core Content is a constant; he also raised the issue of time reduction for testing as a major concern.

SCAAC Discussion:

Anne Keene clarified that the Core Content is a part of the law and that every content area is reviewed on a cycle or timeline-each content area will be reviewed and revised. A decision was made at this point to revisit Roger's question on Core Content during the afternoon session.

The Council began to review two documents from the NTAPAA phone conference provided by staff. Jonathan Dings reiterated his concern that the draft nature of the documents be kept in mind since the questions and answers had not been reviewed and approved by all the parties involved.

The Council discussed the preliminary draft issues from the NTAPAA conference. Jonathan observed that due to the nature of developing longitudinal studies that technical advice would have to be an ongoing part of the process.

The draft documents stand as the record of what was discussed and, while these responses give some consensus, there is additionally other comments from various NTAPAA members.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Sexton asked if there were some way to look at these documents which would focus on the questions the Council had submitted and, in this way, the Council could deal with the most germane topics of the phone conference.

KDE Response:

Jonathan Dings and Brian Gong characterized the phone conference as being more like a discussion of points much like the way this Council discusses issues. Brian noted that the panel did not recommend any particular model. Jonathan Dings added that on page 2 of the "Replies" document the NTAPAA recommended that a longitudinal model comparing student scores should probably be separated by only one year-whether it be the Norm Reference Tests or any other component of CATS.

SCAAC Discussion:

Anne Keene emphasized other points from the "Replies" document dealing with the longitudinal comparison issue which advised that proposals could be offered with many options, for example, one model might be limited to specific components rather than to all the components. She added that the NTAPAA had recommended against putting a work sample into the permanent record or transcript due to some very volatile issues-how representative one piece of work might be if that piece of work came from only one content area. There was discussion of the NTAPAA's rationale for opposing inclusion of a "sample" of student work.

SCAAC Question:

At this point Council member Gary Mielcarek asked if the idea of inclusion of such a "sample" weren't the cornerstone of the Council's thinking on student level accountability? John Stephens and Bob Young both discussed this issue.

SCAAC Discussion:

Anne Keene directed the Council's attention to the NTAPAA's advice that inclusion of sub-test scores for student accountability ("Replies" page 3) would be problematic due to the requirement of larger numbers of items to validate scores at the student level.

Roger Pankratz explained his understanding that use of such scores on transcripts would only be operative at the high school level. His feeling was that the headline in the story on high school testing should read something like "testing time at high school cut in half."

Discussion of the use of sub-test or sub-domain scores and what it would cost to produce reliable and valid scores followed. Some of the questions included:

1. What is the minimum number of items for sub-test which would be needed to assure reliability and validity?
2. Are the same standards applied to the new CATS assessments as were previously used on the KIRIS assessments?

The discussion on the very basic question of reliability and validity for high stakes accountability continued.

4. House Bill 53

Anne Keene

Anne Keene turned the Council's attention to House Bill 53's mandate to reduce testing time. Discussion followed and focused on page limits on open response answers. Implications were discussed. At the high school level 13.5 hours of testing time is required; Suzanne Guyer followed up with a discussion of 4th grade testing time which she observed varies from child to child within in the general parameters given for administration.

She further noted that schools have some flexibility during the testing window on when testing is scheduled and the various times for each component. Maynard Thomas noted that one school's schedule he had seen reflected three consecutive weeks testing. Chair Anne Keene clarified that this was a testing window and not an actual three week testing time.

Roger Pankratz asked the Council what time limit should be recommended for testing? This question was addressed so that potential vendors can be given a time limit. The Chair recognized that the issue needed to be addressed but requested that before the phone conference with Dr. James Catterall the Council consider the issues addressed specifically to the NTAPAA.

The discussion moved to page 4 of the "Replies" document dealing with the mix of items in the CATS assessment components. Some discussion followed.

5. Dr. James Catterall's Conference Call

Dr. Catterall

The Chair called a five minute break while the phone conference with Dr. Catterall was being set up. After the break, the Chair reconvened the meeting and the phone conference began.

The following represents a summary of the questions posed and the answers given

SCAAC Question:

Gary Mielcarek questioned the rationale for the difficulty in designing longitudinal comparisons

Answer:

Dr. Catterall reiterated his previous characterization of the long-standing difficulties testing experts have had with the design of such comparisons including the problems that exists with scaling, and whether or not the same students are exactly the ones compared from testing to testing time. He did note that there were a handful of places where some work is being done with longitudinal comparison and that Kentucky might want to study those situations for problems and successes.

SCAAC Question:

Gary Mielcarek asked a follow up question on Dr. Catterall's opinion of the cohort model.

Answer:

Dr. Catterall noted that there are problems when smaller schools or smaller numbers of students are part of the model; he also noted that fluctuations within the cohort could create problems, but he also noted that Kentucky had done a good job with its averaging scheme. Dr. Catterall mentioned potential equating problems as part of his answer to Gary's question.

SCAAC Questions:

Roger Pankratz asked should the state put out an Request For Proposal which would invite vendors to purpose longitudinal models and then work through the NTAPAA for advice on the technical soundness of what was offered? Could some kind of pilot program be part of the process with reviews to follow up in determining the desirability and technical soundness of such models?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall suggested that there might be some merit in doing it that way, but cautioned that the state would need to look very closely at what vendors would purpose since vendors may offer "fairly glossy" options which may not be desirable in the long run.

SCAAC Question:

Benny Lile asked if it were not true that if we invited vendors to make proposals that we would need to set the grade levels we wanted to assess now?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall proposals would need to include test for spring 1999 that would have some longitudinal capacity; he also suggested that linking 99 to 97-98 would be a possibility for some longitudinal comparison-a kind of backward look or design.

SCAAC Question:

Benny Lile asked again if we would not need to set grade levels and content areas we would want to use for longitudinal comparison now?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall that makes sense; the state might want to present any models that have been looked at and rejected so that vendors would have that information going into the process and, thereby, avoid known problems. He went on to say that a longitudinal look at more years would be more desirable than fewer and that such comparisons are easier in some content areas than in others - e.g. reading, language arts; more difficult in science and other content areas.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Sexton observed that teachers seem to favor longitudinal comparisons because they see it as making sense, yet NTAPAA seems to counsel against it and seems to be saying that tracking kids creates a problem

Answer:

Dr. Catterall said when reporting scores for a cohort, varying numbers of those kids may not have been a part of that school prior to the time of assessment; a better questions maybe what percent of the students teachers presently have show success or growth?

SCAAC Question:

Bob Young referenced page 3 of the "Replies" document and asked if there were any reliable and valid way to include a sample of student work in the permanent record or as part of a transcript?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall announced that there were degrees of variability, but that the NTAPAA had taken a very quick stance against the inclusion of a student work sample. Many questions were raised - what is selected? Who selects the piece? What does it mean? How would the information be used and interpreted? Dr. Catterall suggested that the Council might also consider the motivation problem; that some kids might defy the process and include inappropriate remarks which would not render any useful information.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Sexton asked if the NTAPAA had anything else to recommend on the issue of student accountability.

Answer:

Dr. Catterall stated that scores on transcripts make sense; he said that a threshold of something like 6 open response and 24 multiple choice questions might be enough to produce reliable and technically sound reports for transcripts; there was some discussion of how and what high school students might value and that the entire problem of motivation as a constant factor to consider; in summary: scores on transcripts seem to make sense; perhaps there are other types of displays of student work which could be more desirable-at least that might be explored.

SCAAC Question:

Roger Pankratz asked if Dr. Catterall would comment on the use of sub-scores.

Answer:

Dr. Catterall said that sub-scores might have a diagnostic purpose; however, again the question of the number and mix of items on the assessment would need to be studied since smaller numbers in subsets may be problematic.

Question:

Brian Gong asked if the same caveats about representative issues of using writing samples apply if the on demand writing assessment piece became the piece used for the student record?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall noted that this on demand piece would not have the sampling problem of the other open response pieces, so that could become a part of a transcript or student record.

Question:

Jonathan Dings asked for clarification on using the writing prompt in the on demand writing assessment-why this piece instead of one of the other open response answers from content areas, for example, the reading open response piece?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall clarified that his understanding of the problem was placing a single item from the open response component of the assessment as a work sample in a transcript; much would depend on the selection process; again who would select the piece? With the on demand prompt there is a single writing assignment that the school announces and that certain kinds of writing will be among those assessed; this creates a better transcript piece from a technical perspective than one of the other open response answers.

There was a general discussion of the issues of using the on demand prompt as the specific work sample for transcript inclusion. Some of the issues included: that what is measured on the on demand prompt can be made clearer, these are less specific content based pieces and can measure ability or skills in organization, written expression, and communication skills.

Question:

Jonathan Dings: addressed the issue of scoring an item twice; once for content covered and once for the writing itself.

Answer:

Dr. Catterall stated that this was discussed by NTAPAA but no strong recommendation was made on this issue; this kind of change would involve a basic reorientation to the exam by both students and teachers; one effect would be to push the entire system toward communication skills which may deflect focus away from content development; isn't the Kentucky goal to move more into the development of stronger content? Wouldn't that aggravate the problems with assessment now if that were the change in focus?

General discussion on use of writing samples followed and it was decided that Dr. Catterall would want to discuss these issues as posed with the NTAPAA. However, Dr. Catterall did say that open response in reading assessment might be a good place to double up to include both considerations of content and writing skills and then with the possibility built in to put that piece into a transcript or record if it were proven to be technically sound and reliable.

SCAAC Question:

Kay Freeland ask could there be some way to create a seamless test built to assess at elementary and middle school level which would combine Norm Reference Tests and KIRIS-like multiple-choice items to get longitudinal data?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall mentioned that the "seamless" concept would be difficult; the seam is between the items that are normed and the open response items.

Discussion of possibilities and problems followed. The desire to match to the extent possible with Kentucky's Core Content is one overriding problem. It was noted that multiple measures may well be the best option given the variety of desired results that Kentucky is looking for in the assessment and accountability components. Multiple measures in an accountability system make reliability and validity more complicated.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Sexton (Roger?) ask what is a sensible rule of thumb to add any new components and still retain reliability?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall discussed the following points:

1. Any equating that is done needs to be defensible-documenting the process for future review by NTAPAA for assuring validity is very important; in this way, problems that emerge with equating can be remedied as the process goes forward.
2. If the equating doesn't work, or is not defensible, then you stop equating and have a transition period.

3. Be aware that thinking through the process with a focus on where the state wants to go with assessment and accountability is critical in order to make these defensible choices.
4. In the Kentucky plan, there is always the need to link to the past.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Young: would there be a problem down the road in this process where we couldn't have accountability, especially if the link is broken?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall projected that if the scale remains the same there is no problem; if the scaling changes, then the past becomes only history.

SCAAC Question:

Bob Young ask if student accountability is added now, would there still be a problem?

Answer:

Dr. Catterall replied that some measures could serve double duty; there would be some trade off and you may loose comparability at that point.

Jonathan Dings talked about the Office of Education Accountability's (OEA) report to Dr. Catterall while he was on the phone. We received copies of the report after lunch.

The conference call ended at this point. Jonathan Dings reviewed some of the issues now before the Council. The following lists some of the major points:

1. What is the desirability of developing a single form? Is that a must or not?
2. Single forms would mean there would have to be replacement of items, probably all or most which in turn makes equating difficult.
3. There was a restatement of the point that the whole program would need vary careful scrutiny, not just small segments; there is a need to see connections and interactions.
4. The points from the OEA conference call regarding Request For Proposals (RFP) were brought up including: The match to Core Content
5. Student accountability-use in transcripts or not?; How to address this across all grade levels, especially in a high stakes context?
6. To insure student accountability, would testing every year be a must?
7. Could one assessment with a Kentucky component embedded in the assessment be an option?
8. General scoring protocol problems including adding more scoring points or categories

6. Council Issues

Anne Keene

Some discussion followed and then the Chair asked for any revisions to May 20th minutes be given to Jon Frederick; the final document will be approved this afternoon.

The Council agreed with Kay Freeland's request that the Council reconvene at 1:30 PM. All agreed and the Council recessed for lunch.

Anne Keene reconvened the Council and asked for a roll call. Eleven members were present and the quorum was met.

SCAAC Discussion:

The Chair clarified the rules that nine members constituted a quorum and a simple majority would pass a motion. She also reminded the Council that any Council member could request a roll call vote. Anne Keene commended the Council for its attention to detail and attention to all the issues raised. A council member expressed their concern that if there is any degree of disagreement that under those circumstances the Council delay until more Council members would be present, especially if only the minimum of nine for a quorum were present and the vote were close.

SCAAC Question:

Benny Lile asked a procedural question about whether the Council would continue to vote on single issues, or if the entire package under the recommendation would be voted on. In response to these two concerns, Jonathan Dings emphasized again the necessity of some decisions being made during this session. Maynard Thomas asked if those Council members who were absent would be receiving all the same materials given to those present? Sharon Solomon questioned whether they could vote if they received mail and haven't been present for discussion. It was confirmed by the Chair that every effort would be made to use the mail, email, or fax to get materials to absent Council members.

SCAAC Motion:

John Stephens made a motion that the Council resume looking at the working matrix of recommendations at the point where it had left off and complete that portion before proceeding further. Motion was seconded by Maynard Thomas. The Council approved the motion by a unanimous voice vote. Kay Freeland asked for John to clarify the intent of his motion; he did so.

7. Issue of Score Points

Jonathan Dings

Jonathan Dings handed out draft documents: "Recommendations for Building an RFP" and "Reactions to May 26 Conference Call." He clarified item #7 in the RFP document including the possibility of adding score points for the open response portion of the assessment.

SCAAC Question:

Sue Rigney asked Jonathan if he had any data or findings which address the issue of score points. Jonathan gave a brief characterization of the current 4 score points and noted that adding many more points would make linking and equating of items difficult. At this point Jonathan recognized Jerry Lunney from the Office of Education Accountability who agree that any changes in score points would need to be addressed in the RFP, and that this issue would require consideration at some point.

Anne Keene asked Jerry Lunney's advice on how to design score points; a few more points might be more helpful if they are well defined and then scorers are trained well and, then, quality checking for scoring accuracy is done. Questions and answers followed.

SCAAC Question:

Linda Sheffield ask would 24 points per content area or the 4 points of the 6 open response items would be satisfactory?

Answer:

Jerry Lunney: Yes, I would say so, but there are some points of disagreement on this matter.

Jonathan Dings discussed some of the problems or challenges especially when scorers are looking at partial answers to items-how would these responses score on the 4 point scale? Jonathan said he sees the bigger issue as being the number of standards that would be needed. While there are points within each score point, schools do not get any credit other than the 1-4 points on the scale. Jerry Lunney questioned the resources required to change the scoring, including training scorers. It seems the costs would be substantial in order to reset score points, do benchmarking, and, then, train scorers.

8. National Norm Referenced Test (NRT)

Scott Trimble

At this point Chairperson Anne Keene directed attention to the working matrix in particular the reference to the law which states " a customized or commercially available norm-referenced test. " The recommendation of the council had previously been to use a shelf NRT. Jonathan Dings asked for a point of order as to what the Council would actually be discussing and deciding upon this afternoon. Anne Keene clarified that the issue is whether the Council is recommending an NRT matched to the Core Content to the extent possible with some mechanism built into the process to verify that the match is to the extent possible - this is the part of the law which mandates that teachers are to have significant input into test development.

Bob Sexton voiced his thought that the Council should be as specific in the language as possible regarding teacher involvement. Roger Pankratz noted that his intention was to add the specific language. Sue Rigney informed the Council that the Department is currently thinking through how this involvement by Kentucky educators might be implemented.

SCAAC Motion:

Benny Lile moved that the Council include in the recommendation language to the effect that Kentucky educators would verify the degree of match to Core Content to the extent possible. The motion was seconded by Kay Freeland. Bob Young asked for clarification as to whether this motion pertained only to the NRT component of assessment. Bob Sexton called the question and the motion passed by a voice vote without opposition.

SCAAC Discussion:

The Chair noted for the record that Council member Maxie Johnson was now present. The discussion was focused on grades tested with a NRT. Council member Sharon Solomon, representative of the PTA, voiced the desire of the organization to have NRT at all grades not just at grades 3,6, and 9. Discussion followed on the costs and time for administration necessary for this inclusive model of NRT.

Benny Lile offered his opinion that additional NRT testing would gain widespread acceptance, but it is the cost that is in question. The problems with asking for multiple options was discussed with the major concern being budgetary constraints.

SCAAC Discussion/Questions:

Benny asked if the costs would be totally unreasonable to add more NRT? Bob Sexton added that many districts already give additional NRT's and the question he would ask is whether or not the state wants to mandate these additional tests and pay for them? Maxie Johnson shared that her teachers are against adding any further testing because they already feel overwhelmed by the present testing program. Suzanne Guyer added her concerns about how these testing scores might be used in the future? Would they somehow add these scores on additional NRT to accountability? Linda Sheffield stated that her information said that percentiles on these kinds of assessment do not seem to change dramatically from one year to the next. She also added that parents will have sufficient NRT data; she felt that the entire intent of reform had been to move more toward standards-based assessment and away from the NRT kind of data. She asked the Council if it was their desire to put that much emphasis on assessment that is different from standards-based assessment?

Kay Freeland stated that there must be some compromise to give the kind of information parents seek, and keep the KIRIS-like assessment components. She expressed concerns that she hears about assurances that students master basic skills. Bob Sexton raised the question of whether any of this additional testing would add testing time to assessment, and he reminded the Council that House Bill 53 mandated that less time be spent on assessment.

Benny Lile said he saw this as the Council's opportunity to shape how NRT might be used in the state, whereas, that same opportunity may not exist later. Discussion followed.

SCAAC Motion:

Benny Lile moved that the recommendation change to say that NRT will be given to all grades 3-8 in addition to 3, 6, 9. The motion was seconded by Sharon Solomon. Discussion followed. Maynard Thomas asked if this issue could be revisited later after the motion was voted on? There was some discussion and clarification about what occurred during discussion and conferencing with the NTAPAA and Legislative Oversight Committee since the May 12th meeting. She asked that the Council now consider the recommendation in light of all the information now available. Council members stated their various opinions on the desirability of recommending the additional NRT assessment in the motion. The question was called for. After a voice vote which had both ayes and nays, Sharon Solomon called for a roll call vote.

The vote follows:

Ayes: Sharon Solomon, Benny Lile, and Kay Freeland

Nays: Suzanne Guyer, Maxie Johnson, Anne Keene, Gary Mielcarek, Roger Pankratz, Bob Sexton, John Stephens, Maynard Thomas, Linda Sheffield and Bob Young

The vote was three to ten, and the motion failed to carry.

John Stephens was recognized by the Chair and asked the Council to reaffirm the original recommendation to give a shelf NRT test which matches Kentucky Core Content to the extent possible in grades 3, 6, 9. A standardized 10th grade post-secondary skills preparation assessment would be given also and all these measures would be given during the testing window.

SCAAC Discussion:

The 10th grade vocational measure was discussed as to what would be the best language for framing it within the recommendation. The Council decided on "a post-secondary skills preparation measure." KBE member Helen Mountjoy asked if this 10th grade test would provide information for career and academic preparation. Suzanne Guyer asked when the test would be administered since it would not be an NRT.

SCAAC Motion:

John Stephens made the motion that the Council accept the language and include that NRT be employed for assessment only, that it be reported to school and parents, but that the data not be used for accountability purposes. Suzanne Guyer seconded the motion. The motion passed. The matrix form of the recommendations will reflect these changes and additions.

SCAAC Discussion/Question:

Discussion of the rationale column for recommendation #1 was discussed. Specifically, the Council questioned the fact that Kentucky current assessment includes all student scores and that NRT is not normed using the scores of all students-in particular those students with special needs.

The Chair recessed the Council for dinner.

9. Longitudinal Models

Scott Trimble

After dinner, Anne Keene reconvened the Council. The roll was called, and a quorum was present with 13 Council members answering the roll call.

The Chair asked the Council if it would be acceptable for the department and the Chair to clean up any of the wording required to produce a clean document; the final recommendations will not differ as to substance however. The Council agreed.

SCAAC Discussion/Motion:

John Stephens made the motion to reaffirm the longitudinal comparison recommendation as stated in the recommendations document; Linda Sheffield seconded the motion. A voice vote carried the motion without opposition. The Chair opened discussion on the language in the rationale column of the recommendation. Linda Sheffield suggested that even though the NTAPAA has already said they know of no technically sound existing models that there should be some study and research done of models that are currently being developed in other states. Roger Pankratz suggested that the process involve an openness to look at any models the contractors may offer in a bid. Discussion followed on how the Council wished to phrase and state the rationale. As a point of clarification it was noted that the term CATS is used in reference to the entire new system of assessment and accountability and is not the name of the actual tests. It was suggested that the term CATS' assessments be used in reference to the tests themselves until such a time that the tests may be named.

10. Test Design/Scheduling of Test Administration

Scott Trimble

The Council next took up the issues of valid and reliable scores, and the test form design. What test forms would be designed which would permit both school and student level accountability and assessment? The following points were discussed:

1. Inclusion of student work samples as part of a permanent record or transcript
2. Reducing testing time
3. Comparable forms
4. Existing bank of test items which Kentucky owns; questions of the sufficiency of these to be used and for how long they would last

SCAAC Motion:

Roger Pankratz moved the Council adopt the recommendation of test forms as drafted with the word defensible added to the text. Bob Sexton seconded the motion. The motion carried by a voice vote without opposition.

SCAAC Discussion:

The Council discussed reports and kinds of information that might become available from the CATS components. The general feeling of the Council was that all information possible should be gathered. This prompted questions of time and resources it would take to gather and report information.

SCAAC Motion:

Roger Pankratz moved that the language under the "Valid and Reliable Scores" section of the working matrix of recommendations should remain the same except for adding the word defensible. John Stephens seconded the motion and the wording was amended to conform to the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

SCAAC Discussion:

The next topic for discussion was item mix. Basically, whether the assessment would use both open response and multiple choice items. Discussion followed.

SCAAC Motion:

Bob Young moved that the language of the recommendation read: " use multiple choice and open response items matched to the Core Content to the extent possible and that Kentucky educators will be involved in the development of items and test blueprint." Maxie Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

SCAAC Discussion:

The next issue the Council discussed was what in CATS' assessments will be used to provide consistent comparison with the available 96-97 and 97-98 test components.

SCAAC Motion:

Roger Pankratz made a motion to accept the recommendations on the working matrix except that the language should be changed to conform with the grade 10 language used in the previous recommendations. Linda Sheffield seconded the motion. Discussion followed the motion and second.

SCAAC Discussion:

John Stephens referred to the advice of the NTAPAA on the problems inherent in moving the testing from spring to fall, as far as, equating would be concerned; he pointed out several places in the NTAPAA and OEA document where fall testing was specifically discouraged. John also mentioned the alignment of curriculum which has already been done by schools. He expressed his desire to have scores back by early fall so that the data could be used to provide the seniors with as much help as possible.

Maxie Johnson added her concerns to moving testing windows and asked for more clarification. She specifically felt that testing seniors in the fall may yield the same results or equate to the spring testing of juniors.

John Stephens picked up his rationale for leaving testing in the spring as advised by NTAPAA and OEA. He felt that the focus of the assessment should be on what is most

advantageous for students. He also noted that there are variety of high school schedules and calendars which would be problematic for changing the testing time.

Bob Sexton observed that the discussion always broke down when the high school testing issues were raised because of issues including: motivation problems, practical use of the data provided by assessment, and the varieties of schedules throughout the state. He proposed that a new accountability system design would be necessary at the high school level. Basically, Bob questioned whether or not the Council needed to discuss this issue and/or all the technical problems during these deliberations.

Linda Sheffield said that while the Council should not get hung up on equating at the high school level, nonetheless, these are critical issues.

SCAAC Motion:

The discussion was suspended briefly while the corrected minutes of the May 20th meeting were approved. Sharon Solomon moved adoption of the corrected minutes as provided and Maynard Thomas seconded the motion. The Council approved the minutes and adjourned for dinner.

After dinner Chair Anne Keene reconvened the council and called for a roll call. Thirteen members were present, and the quorum was established.

The motion on the floor was repeated: Roger's motion that the Council reaffirm the language under the heading "Consistent Administration" except to conform the language of grade 10 to conform to the previous changes in other recommendations. Anne Keene recognized John Stephens who recapitulated his concern on the NTAPAA advice which basically discouraged changing the testing to fall.

Linda Sheffield outlined on the marker board options previously discussed for the purpose of clarification. These options were discussed.

Roger Pankratz offered to table or withdraw his original motion so that some motion that the Council wished to vote on could be put on the table. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of fall and spring testing. Among the issues raised were:

1. The desirability of having all students at the high school level to be testing at the same time so that the school would not virtually shut down during the testing time;
2. The motivational factors which seem constant;
3. Reduction of testing time; content areas to be tested;
4. The fact that House Bill 53 does call for some kind of performance credit in arts and humanities; and
5. The comprehensive nature of the Core Content in practical living and vocational studies.

Following the discussion, John Stephens moved that the Council recommend the format noted as option #2 in the handouts: spring testing with 9th grade using an NRT; 10th

grade using a standardized vocational assessment tool; 11th grade testing math, science, social studies, and reading, and 12th grade on demand writing prompt, arts and humanities, practical living and vocational studies and the writing portfolio. Bob Sexton seconded the motion. After Linda Sheffield asked for some clarification on the top part of the matrix regarding grades 3-9 employing the same pattern of subjects and grades tested in spring 97-98, John Stephens amended his motion to remove any further specific consideration of writing portfolios as a separate issue. Suzanne Guyer seconded the amendment.

A discussion followed of exactly where the reading assessment should be placed. John Stephens moved adoption of the option on the table and the 3-9 language; Gary Mielcarek seconded the motion. Bob Sexton called the question. There was a vote on the question. The motion carried without opposition.

SCAAC Comments/Discussion:

The Council considered the rationale section of the matrix for the recommended option. The following points were raised:

1. Reduction of testing time by one-third; testing would be less disruptive because all students would be testing concurrently;
2. Results in social studies, science, math, and reading could be used for instructional purposes and personal planning;
3. Standards may need some revision;
4. Core Content results could become part of the students' transcripts; priority could be given to 11th grades reports

The Council focused the next part of their consideration to the grades 3-8 options for on demand assessment components. Suzanne Guyer addressed issues of time spent on assessment at these levels, as well as, the preparation time schools at these levels spend prior to testing. As part of this same discussion, Jonathan Dings discussed some problems regarding writing portfolios and any splitting of the 4th grade assessment between 4th and 5th grades. He urged the Council to make determinations with caution. Maynard Thomas shared that the 4th grade teachers he had talked with felt frustrated over the inability to move students out of the novice category. Maxie Johnson shared her belief that reducing the 4th grade required writing portfolio pieces from 6 to 4 would offer some relief for 4th grade teachers.

Sue Rigney was recognized to discuss the writing portfolio issues. Some of Sue's points included:

1. Twelfth grade level--some colleges and universities are asking for writing portfolios either for entrance or placement purposes
2. Statewide professional development is available from writing consultants at no cost to schools; these consultants can help school districts to develop more effective writing across the content areas and grade level specific strategies

3. The writing portfolios were designed to fulfill the Academic Expectation which addresses student ability to write for a variety of purposes and audiences with emphasis on real purposes and audiences

At this point Starr Lewis who heads the Kentucky Writing Project was available to answer questions and discuss portfolio issues by telephone conference call. She was asked to share the recommendations of the Writing Advisory Committee (WAC). House Bill 53 specifically mandates that the Council shall be advised by the WAC. Starr gave the following overview of WAC recommendations but cautioned that the work on all the issues was not finished:

1. Fourth grade writing portfolios: reduce to a 4 piece collection with the major types of writing each being the focus of the pieces (personal, reflective, transactive . . .). WAC recommended that the content area piece should remain a requirement.
2. Seventh grade portfolios: reduce to a 5 piece collection stressing the specific kinds of writing; one piece from each of the 4 categories plus one additional piece
3. Twelfth grade portfolios: remain at a 6 piece collection with current specifications--5 pieces plus a letter to the reviewer; content area pieces required would be reduced from 2 to 1

Starr Lewis said the WAC recommended that the portfolio be included for accountability. The WAC was split in opinions over specific strategies for reducing time spent on portfolio production. They decided to meet in July to develop more comprehensive recommendations on strategies which can be grade level specific. Some of the WAC's basic advice included the following points:

1. Teach writing in relation to content
2. The need for teacher planning prior to students writing
3. Emphasis on prewriting rather than conferencing so that revision time might be cut back
4. Teach effective revision strategies

Sue Rigney related that her experience with portfolios indicated that psychometric experts tend to endorse the 6 piece portfolio and, in many cases, had gained technical approval. She urged the study of reduction of the number of pieces; this summer the Department will be using the summer audit to do some preliminary work on feasibility of the reduction of numbers of pieces.

Roger Pankratz re-emphasized that the practitioners in the field were very concerned about this issue of time reduction with writing portfolios--language arts teachers in specific.

Starr Lewis emphasized that the assumption that just reducing number of required pieces will automatically lessen time students and teachers spend on portfolio production may not hold true unless other considerations are addressed. She said that teachers who tended

to spend an inordinate amount of time on the 6 pieces may do the same with a smaller number, regardless of how many that may be.

Sue Rigney noted that there are ongoing considerations regarding time spent on portfolio development, and, hopefully, these considerations will lead to some good strategies for teachers.

Dr. Cody focused attention on the actual language of House Bill 53 and the requirement that the Council receive advice from the WAC; Anne Keene referenced the relevant section of the law which charges WAC with giving advice to Kentucky Board of Education.

SCAAC Motion:

The Council turned its attention back to the discussion of the recommendation for grades 3-9 and spring testing option. Roger Pankratz moved the adoption of the original plan and recommendation as given on the working matrix which would use the same grades and pattern for 3-9 as for spring 97-98. John Stephens seconded the motion, and the motion carried without opposition.

SCAAC Comments/Discussion:

Jerry Lunney addressed the Council on the 48 different configurations of elementary and middle school grades levels which create real issues about the interaction of testing pattern and school structure. Roger Pankratz followed up Jerry Lunney's remarks with his opinion that there must be better communication between grade levels from elementary to middle and middle school to high school.

There was some discussion of the difficulty of the standards on the 7th grade science assessment. In general the standards seem high and Kentucky scores are low. Suzanne Guyer addressed the specific problems she sees with 4th grade, as well as, the 7th grade science assessment. It was noted that there are those at the national and world level who would say that science standards are not high enough. Perhaps the problem might be related to content of the science curriculum and the specific academic preparation of science teachers. Bob Sexton suggested there would need to be scrutiny of what is taught and how it is taught in order to answer these questions of standards. Dr. Cody mentioned that a study is currently being done which is specifically asking how many teachers at the middle school level are teaching out of their content area--this is a certification question as well.

The Council began its discussion of the question of reducing the amount of time spent on assessment. The point was made that the rationale at the 11th grade level points out the reduction of time by one-third. The Council discussed reducing the student responses to one page. Suzanne Guyer said she did not support that move since there are so many variables at the 4th grade relative to size of handwriting, motor skills, IEP's and other plans which allow some students to use technology in their responses. Equating the amount of space would be a problem in her view.

Jonathan Dings mentioned that a small percentage of students actually use more than one page. He went on to say that a page limit would reduce the amount of time for scoring, and it would most likely cost less and be easier for contractors to bid.

Linda Sheffield asked what would happen if the Council took some middle ground on this issue and allowed two pages? Would that capture a higher percentage of students who need an extra page? Jonathan Dings said that could be looked at in view of past testing and how many student used just two pages for a response. Linda asked for clarification on whether the one page was a page which also had the question on it or was that an entire blank page. Jonathan answered that it was not a page including the question. At this point, Helen Mountjoy interjected the question of whether the students who used more pages were students who scored higher on the tests? The answer from Jonathan Dings was that in some cases yes but in other cases it was not true. The distribution of scores in that 1-2% would have to be studied more closely for patterns in scoring among students using multiple or single pages for responses.

Bob Young expressed his opinion that the one page limit would have various effects: some students would do more planning and drafting and revising and may take more time to answer.

Suzanne Guyer said that the testing window seems an appropriate length since it gives schools flexibility in stretching out the testing which avoids student fatigue; also there are usually weather and other external factors which interrupt the testing and schools need that flexibility. Scott Trimble addressed the reasoning behind the three week testing window which included the normal adjustments usually required by some schools due to the same external factors mentioned by Suzanne. Bob Sexton said that his suggestion went to reducing actual testing time and not to reducing the testing window. Maxie Johnson discussed some other common sense issues about testing: schools like hers do not test on Mondays or Fridays, and morning testing yields better results than afternoon testing.

Roger asked if the RFP would need to deal with this level of detail; he noted that the long session had caused fatigue, and the Council should address the page limit issue and not the testing window issue. Jonathan Dings mentioned that specifying might invite higher bidding from contractors. The discussion turned to whether or not students who used more pages scored higher than those who used fewer pages.

John Stephens said that he felt teachers would be comfortable with the one page limit as long as this was noted early in the school year and that schools could go toward the assessment with that information. Gary Mielcarek asked what would happen if a student went over the one page limit? Jonathan noted that in those cases nothing other than the one page would be scored.

SCAAC Motion:

Roger Pankratz moved that the page limit be held to one. Gary Mielcarek seconded the motion. Clarification was given that this one page limit would only be for open response

questions and not affect the on demand writing prompt. Discussion followed including whether or not the paper would be lined or unlined. The Council voted on the motion and the motion passed by eleven votes to two votes.

Roger Pankratz asked if the Council would like to recommend some changes in total amount of time necessary for testing? It was noted that presently a maximum recommended two and a half hours were allowed per core content area.

Bob Sexton moved that the Council recommend that contractors design assessment with recommended administration time of two and a half hours per major test component. Bob Young seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

John Stephens moved and Suzanne Guyer seconded the motion that the assessment use comparable test forms with single page limit with delivery date of September 15 or earlier for reports. The motion passed without opposition.

The final action of the Council was to set the next meeting date to deal with accountability issues. After some discussion, the next Council meeting was set for July 6-7, 1998. The agenda and other details will be communicated to all members. Before the Council adjourned, Sharon Soloman shared the National Standards for Parental Involvement produced by the PTA. Copies were made available.

Adjournment

SCAAC Motion:

Benny Lile moved the for adjournment. Maxie Johnson seconded the motion. Chair Anne Keene adjourned the Council.